

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 IO-13 ACDA-19 MBFR-03

TRSE-00 OMB-01 RSR-01 /129 W
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O R 050725 Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1205

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

CINCPACREP CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 3787

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, MY, SN, AS

SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN WITHDRAWALS FROM ANZUK

REF: STATE 130750 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: DEFENSE MINISTER BARNARD CONFIRMED JULY 4 THAT AUSTRALIAN PLANS TO WITHDRAW FORCES FROM ANZUK HAD BEEN APPROVED BY CABINET. THIS ACTION OBVIOUSLY TAKEN IN ORDER TO PREVENT SUBJECT BEING DEBATED AT LENGTH AT ALP FEDERAL CONFERENCE NEXT WEEK. IN CIRCUMSTANCES, WE DO NOT BELIEVE USG REPRESENTATIONS TO GOA AT THIS TIME WOULD SERVE ANY PARTICULAR PURPOSE. END SUMMARY.

2. DEFENSE MINISTER BARNARD REPLIED TO QUESTIONS FROM JOURNALISTS IN CANBERRA JULY 3 IN WHICH DETAILS OF THE PHASED WITHDRAWAL OF AUSTRALIAN FORCES FROM SINGAPORE WERE CONFIRMED. BARNARD' S REMARKS CAME AFTER APPROVAL BY THE FULL CABINET JULY 2 OF THE WITHDRAWAL PLANS.
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IN ESSENCE, BARNARD REITERATED THE POSITION WHICH THE GOA HAS BEEN TAKING OVER PAST SEVERAL MONTHS RELATING TO ANZUK AND WHICH, AFTER HIS RECENT VISIT TO LONDON, HAS BEEN TOLD IN ADVANCE TO ALL OTHER ANZUK MEMBERS.

3. BARNARD REITERATED AUSTRALIA'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW BULK OF AUSTRALIAN GROUND FORCES BY END OF FEBRUARY 1974. HE SAID THAT BY APRIL 1975 AUSTRALIAN TROOPS IN SINGAPORE WILL NUMBER ABOUT 150. TASKS FOR REMAINING TROOPS WILL BE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND OTHER DEFENSE AID PROJECTS, AND TO SUPPORT AND FACILITATE PROGRAMS OF COMBINED EXERCISES. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY PRICHETT OF ADOD JULY 3, EMBOFFS WERE ALSO INFORMED THAT CONTROVERSIAL AUSTRALIA SIGNALS DETACHMENT IN SINGAPORE WILL ALSO BE WITHDRAWN SOMETIME DURING CALENDAR 1974. BARNARD NOTED THAT CABINET HAS TAKEN NO DECISION WITH REGARD TO THE TIMING OF WITHDRAWAL OF THE MIRAGE SQUADRONS FROM BUTTERWORTH, MALAYSIA, BUT THAT THE QUESTION WOULD BE REVIEWED AT A FUTURE DATE. PRICHETT SAID SUCH REVIEW WOULD TAKE PLACE NO LATER THAN MARCH 1975.

4. IN PRICHETT CONVERSATION, EMBOFFS ASKED ABOUT STATUS OF AUSTRALIAN NAVAL FORCES IN SINGAPORE. PRICHETT R

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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